

1. (Once Amended) A[n educational] system, comprising:

an object having at least one visually recognizable symbol thereon;
an emitter within said object for emitting a signal uniquely representative of
said at least one visually recognizable symbol; and
an enclosure, including:
a surface for supporting said object, and
a processor, including means for receiving said signal from said
emitter, said processor capable of identifying said symbol from said signal,
and capable of identifying a position of said object on said surface.

2. (Once Amended) An apparatus for entering data into a computer, the data being entered
via the placement of a plurality of objects on the apparatus, each object having at least one
unique item of [detectable] data associated therewith, comprising:

a substantially flat, planar surface for receiving the placement of [an] the
plurality of objects;

one or more detectors capable of detecting the at least one unique item of data
associated with [an] the object placed on the surface;

a [line] communication link capable of communicating the detected data from
the apparatus to the computer.

3. An apparatus as in claim 2, whereby the detectors are capable of detecting the
location of an object on the surface.

4. (New) An apparatus for receiving data from a data emission means within an object, and relaying the data to a computer, the data uniquely representative of indicia associated with the object, comprising:

a surface for supporting the object at a user-defined location on said surface;
sensors provided adjacent said surface for sensing the indicia-representative data from the data emission means, and for sensing said user-defined location of the object on the surface; and

means for communicating the indicia-representative data and said user-defined location to the computer.

5. (New) An apparatus as recited in claim 4, further comprising means for giving off a signal capable of being received by the data emission means, said signal capable of empowering said data emission means to emit the indicia-representative data.

6. (New) An apparatus for transferring data to a computer, the computer including a surface and means associated with said surface for receiving and forwarding data to the computer, comprising:

an object capable of being supported on the surface at a user-defined location on the surface, said object including a character on a face of said object; and

an emitter within said object for emitting data indicative of said character and said user-defined location, said data capable of being transferred to the computer by the data receiving and forwarding means.

7. (New) An apparatus as in claim 1, wherein said object comprises a block and said visually recognizable symbol comprises an alphanumeric character on said block.

8. (New) An apparatus as in claim 1, wherein said visually recognizable symbol comprises a braille character.

9. (New) A system for transferring data to a computer, comprising:

- a block having a character on a surface of said block;
- a surface for supporting said block at a user defined location on said surface;
- an emitter provided within said block, said emitter capable of emitting a signal representative of said character; and
- a reader in communication with the computer for receiving said signal and for receiving information indicative of said user-defined location of said block on said surface.

10. (New) A system for transferring data to a computer as recited in claim 9, wherein said character is an alphanumeric character.

11. (New) A system for transferring data to a computer as recited in claim 9, wherein said character is a braille character.

12. (New) A system for transferring data to a computer as recited in claim 9, further comprising means for sending a power signal to said emitter, said power signal capable of energizing said emitter to enable said emitter to emit said signal.

E 13. (New) A system for transferring data to a computer as recited in claim 9, the computer comprising video screen for prompting the user to select the block and locate the block at the user-defined location.

14. (New) A system for transferring data to a computer as recited in claim 9, the computer comprising an audio system for prompting the user to select the block and locate the block at the user-defined location.

A2
Cont. 15. (New) A system for transferring data to a computer as recited in claim 13, the computer further comprising an audio system for prompting the user to select the block and locate the block at the user-defined location.

16. (New) An apparatus for entering data into a computer, the data being entered via the placement of a plurality of objects on the apparatus, each object having at least one unique item of data associated therewith, comprising:

a surface for receiving the object;

one or more detectors capable of detecting the at least one unique item of data associated with the object regardless of where the object is placed on the surface;

a communication link capable of communicating the detected data from the apparatus to the computer.